

## **Selected Letters from International Scholars and Activists Supporting Ward Churchill**

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As a Maori lawyer and academic from New Zealand, I have been aware for many years of the high regard within which Professor Churchill is held by indigenous peoples around the world. It has therefore been with some concern that I have watched the investigation of Professor Churchill by the University of Colorado, especially given the generally accepted international recognition of the validity and methodologies of indigenous knowledge.

In New Zealand, Maori people are very clear that the western intellectual tradition has not, and still does not, adequately acknowledge or respect any indigenous critique or interrogation which conflicts with its own received wisdom. Thus it would be of concern to Maori and, I am sure, to other indigenous peoples around the world that the committee investigating the work of Professor Churchill contained no American Indians or members with expertise in either indigenous history or intellectual methodologies. One cannot imagine such a committee investigating the work of a physicist without the advantage of a physicist as a member of the committee.

There are, clearly, academic and intellectual standards which must be adhered to in any intellectual endeavor but it is clear that there are equally relevant and valid indigenous standards which have for many years underpinned Professor Churchill's work. It will be of concern to the international indigenous academic community that the University is unaware of, or has deliberately chosen to ignore, the standards demanded within an indigenous intellectual tradition which Professor Churchill has endeavored to reflect and adhere to over the years.

Moana Jackson  
Director, Maori Law Commission  
Wellington, New Zealand

May 16, 2006

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June-July 2007:

Dear CU Regent,

It is really unbelievable that Academic Institutions of the USA cancel academic freedom in giving in too easily pressure coming from actual US power and their branches despite their illegal, aggressive, greedy behaviour against the whole world!

Shall we accept again witch hunt just because that questionable administration in power want to eliminate free and critical speech, which is actually the most important action against a society in bondage to this most doubtful administration.

We appreciate very much the critical and free speech of Professor Ward Churchill as well as critical speech of Professor Norman Finkelstein and of course of many other courageous intellectuals in the USA which we take as a sign that we still can do something against the US Bulldozer destroying sovereign countries just for oil, promoting wars just for selling weapons, scarifying its youth for the purposes of their private corporations.

It is a shame for freedom lovers of Academic Institutions over the world if you capitulate and vote on the dismissal of Professor Ward Churchill just because of cowardice in a very critical moment of world consciousness, a really historical moment for a world of justice and freedom or for a world of citizens in hostage of some administrators in hubris for a very doubtful adventure.

Yours sincerely

The Austrian Academic Circle Vienna

20 members

The French Academic Circle Paris

80 members

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Dear Sirs:

I am living in Portugal, what representatives of your federal administration use to call "Old Europe".

As perhaps might have come to your attention, Pew, Zogby, and a host of other worldwide opinion polls have shown that the standing of the United States of America in the rest of the world has suffered a great deal during the last years. However, I have been able to use Ward Churchill's Essay "Some People Push Back" with considerable success in countering antiamericanism here. Most people respond like, "well, not everything is lost over there if they still have people like Ward."

It is true that the Nov. 2004 reelection of George W. Bush was not exactly helpful in this matter, however I think you should award Mr. Churchill a medal for improving America's image worldwide, not fire him.

Sincerely yours,

Martin Kratz  
Portugal

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Dear CU Regents,

I am an American Citizen living in Germany where I am currently completing my Ph.D. in Biophysics. I have been following the case of Ward Churchill's alleged academic misconduct. It appears to me and I would venture to say much of the rest of the Western world, especially here in Germany, that these charges are foundless. When I discuss this case with other graduate students here they are repeatedly astounded at the treatment Dr. Churchill is receiving. They are shocked, as they somehow have a notion that America is a bastion of free speech and this case is clearly about censorship. As open discussion about September 11, 2001, terrorism and America's war on Iraq are much less emotionally charged and more rational here in general, such scapegoating of prominent intellectuals is viewed in a quite negative light. I would hope that you consider that these issues attract international attention and are actually very closely followed here. They do not sit well with many in Europe and are especially disturbing to those in academia, who consider censorship based on blatantly political motives contrary to the very idea of academia itself. Please reconsider your position on these charges. It is obvious that they are spurious. As a scientist and a rational human being I would have to say that any serious evaluation of the charges as they stand do not have any merit and are not sufficient as a basis for the dismissal of a tenured professor.

Sincerely,

Brian Gentry  
Institute for Soft Matter Physics  
University of Leipzig  
Germany

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To the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado

I am not an American, but feel impelled to write because of the values that America and Europe once shared. I have been following with amazement the whole story of Ward Churchill and the attempts to suppress his voice because of the tenor of his statements.

America was once the land of the free. It does not seem to be so any longer. The Enlightenment values which are so important in Europe seem to have taken second place in the US to political and personal considerations. Intellectual freedom and freedom of speech do not seem to be defended any longer. The case of Ward Churchill is a case in point.

The dismissal of Ward Churchill on the petty charges which have been trumped up against him would be an act of profound injustice and would dishonour you personally, the University of Colorado and the United States of America.

Yours sincerely,

Michèle Bailey  
La Plaine  
26130 St. Restitut  
France

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CU Regents,

As a U.S. citizen and as an academic working at a university in Japan, I urge you abandon your efforts to fire and silence Ward Churchill. If you carry through with your plans to unjustly fire Ward Churchill, you will be contributing to the destruction of academic freedom and free speech in the U.S. and beyond. Think carefully before you make a decision which will help move the U.S. in an even more totalitarian direction.

Thank you for your time.

Eric Hauser  
The University of Electro-Communications, Tokyo  
電気通信大学

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James M. Leven  
33 Rollo Court,  
Strasburg Rd,  
London  
SW11 5HL  
UK

CU Regents  
University of Colorado  
c/o Millie Cortez

Dear Sirs,

I write, as a private citizen, to add my voice to the chorus of protest at the treatment of Professor Ward Churchill. I have read several of his works and find him to

be a rare, outstanding and original writer in a very important and neglected area. If the charges you have laid against him are true, then I will feel re-assured that my admiration was not misplaced, because even if your charges can be substantiated, such a small number of omissions and oversights must make him the most scrupulous academic since the dawn of time.

I spent several months traveling around your country exactly 30 years ago; the closest I got to Colorado was dipping my feet in the Colorado river at the foot of the Grand Canyon, where I also met some native Americans. I imagine you are not so far away from where I remember under the same big sky, so I feel I know your neck of the woods. Please don't sour my memory.

Best wishes,  
J. Leven

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To whom it may concern,

I wish to express my solidarity with Ward Churchill and for those who have protested against his possible firing. The Academy would be at a great loss without people like Churchill. His writings may be controversial but this is a scholar's privilege and has been for hundreds of years. Indeed, right-wing scholars have often written controversial books and/or articles and they have continued to hold positions within the academy.

As a free speech issue and as an issue concerning academic freedom, I would urge Colorado University not to fire Ward Churchill. Indeed, we need much more of his kind of scholarship in the days to come.

Sincerely,

Brian T. Thorn, PhD  
Adjunct Faculty Member  
Department of History  
Queen's University  
Kingston, ON Canada

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Dear Madams and Sirs,

I am writing to you from Germany due to the subject of the pending dismissal of Ward Churchill from his position at the University of Colorado. I have read up on the charges brought up against Ward Churchill, and am not so much inclined to argue against them, as to state my opinion on the procedures as such. The report issued by the commission giving information on the allegedly fraudulent research, manages to come across as a well researched and, to a certain degree,

objective assessment. I feel inclined to believe some of the allegations, and will bear them in mind when critically reading any kind of scholarly literature in general, or Ward Churchill in particular, in future. Still I vehemently oppose your endeavour! The point I would like to make is the following:

Is it not inherent to the idea of a free scholarly environment, that such a criticism of Churchill's work should enlighten the reading public, not in the form of preparation for a trial, but by being published as scholarly literature? Why on earth would it seem necessary to ostracize Mr. Churchill? Character Assassination would spring to mind as a probable motive.

Shouldn't the arguing scholars have the chance to prove their respective points through rational and detailed debate, instead of looking back at having established their position through seemingly politically motivated departmental bureaucracy? The path you are taking will stigmatize the criticism of Churchill as the despotic censorship through the agents of the prevailing order, set in motion in order to silence a nonconformist view of current affairs, or discredit it and deprive it of its institutional validity.

You should also keep in mind the stain this will leave on the reputation of American Universities in general. The dominating view in Europe is already inclined to perceive american society as a chauvinist imperial society, with the kind selfrighteousness, that will readily resort to questionable methods in order to enforce their subjective idea of truth and justice.

It is up to you to halt this perception.

Thank you very much for taking my opinion seriously

Thomas Salter